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AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT CAMP MADISON,

ON THE 4th OF JULY, 1843,

BY HON. GEORGE ROBERTSON.



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Book R 65

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more comprehensive and important. Feeling, as we this day must, that we are standing on a narrow isthmus between the great oceans of the eventful past and of the still more eventful future, we instinctively glance backward on the one and forward on the other, and embrace, in the transient vision, a panorama of the pregnant present. Such contemplations are peculiarly appropriate and affecting; and, when intelligent, must be profitable. Mixed with joy and sorrow—hope and fear—gratitude and regret—complacency and humiliation—they must help to exalt our minds and purify our hearts, awaken us to a proper sense of our duties and responsibilities, and, by inspiring more virtuous emotions and resolutions, make us wiser as individuals, and as citizens more useful.

A bird's eye glance at *Kentucky*—physical, moral, and political—past, present, and prospective—may, and ought to, produce all those valuable results, as fruits of this day's commemoration. And if, in any degree, such should be the consequence, our assembling will have been neither barren nor vain; and it will be good for us all that we were here.

Time builds on the ruins itself has made. It destroys to renew and desolates to improve. A wise and benevolent Providence has thus marked its progress in the moral, as well as in the physical, world. The tide which has borne past generations to the ocean of eternity, is hastening to the same doom the living mass now gliding downward to that shoreless and unfathomed reservoir. But whilst the current, in its onward flow, sweeps away all that should perish, like the Nile, it refreshes every desert and fructifies every wild through which it rolls; and, fertilizing one land with the spoils of another, it deposes in a succeeding age the best seeds matured by the sun and gathered by the toil of ages gone before. *Asia* has thus been made tributary to *Africa* and to the younger *Europe*, ancient to modern times, and the middle ages to the more hallowed days in which we ourselves live. One generation dies that another may live and take its place. The desolation of one country has been the renovation of another—the downfall of one system has been the ultimate establishment of a better—and the ruin of nations has been the birth or regeneration of others both wiser and happier. The stream of moral light, with a western destination from the beginning, has, in all its meanderings, increased its volume, until, swoollen by the contribu-

tions and enriched by the gleamings of ages, it has poured its flood on the cis-atlantic world.

America is a living monument of these consoling truths. When, within man's memory, it was blessed with the first footsteps of modern civilization, the germs of inductive philosophy and rational liberty and religion, which had then begun to grow in Europe, but could there be only *engrafted* on the sapless trunks of feudal despotism and consecrated errors, were here transplanted into a virgin soil where they soon expanded into maturity and brought forth sound fruit unblasted by the decays and cankers of the old world. The seminal principles of sound philosophy, true liberty, and pure religion, sifted from the chaff and rectified by the experience of ages, were imported by our pilgrim ancestors to a land which seems to have been prepared by Providence for their successful development in the proper season for assuring to mankind an exalted destiny, at last, on earth.

In less than 250 years from the first settlements at Jamestown and Plymouth, the temperate zone of North America already exhibits many signs that it is the promised land of civil liberty, and that the Anglo-Americans are the chosen depositories of principles and institutions destined to liberate and exalt the human race.

But our own Kentucky is, itself alone, a colossal tower of God's benevolence and time's beneficence to man. Within three score years and ten—the short period allotted for all the works and enjoyments of a human being here below—this fair Commonwealth, now so blessed and distinguished, was a gloomy wilderness, the abode of wild beasts, and the hunting ground and battle field of the still more ferocious red men of the west. Its fertile soil was unfurrowed by the plow, its gigantic forest untouched by the axe of civilized man. Within all its limits wild nature's solitude was unblessed by the voice of reason, religion or law—uncheered by one spire to Heaven—by one hearth of domestic charity, or by the curling smoke of a solitary cottage. But, in the fulness of time, the red man was to be supplanted by the white—the scalping knife by the sword of Justice—the savage war cry by the church bells of christian temples—the panther and the buffaloe by domestic herds—and the wilderness was soon to bloom with all the beauty and fragrance of “*the rose of Sharon and lily of the valley.*”

In 1774, the tide of civilization, moving westward from the

Atlantic, approached the Alleghanies—the Anglo-Saxon race, destined to conquer and enlighten the earth, crossed the mountain barrier—and *Finley*, and *Boone*, and *Harrod*, and *Logan*, and *Knox*, and *Whitley*, and *Kenton*, hunters of Kentucky—came, and saw, and conquered. They brought with them the rifle, the axe, the plough, and THE BIBLE. And, thus armed, this van guard of their race led the forlorn hope of western civilization to victory and to fortune. The Indians fell by their rifles, the forest by their axes, and savage idols tumbled before God's holy Book—until the current of population, rolling on, wave by wave, in rapid succession, soon made Kentucky a rich and powerful State—the first born of the union of 1788, and now, even now, unsurpassed by physical blessings and moral power—already the mother of younger Commonwealths in the great Valley of the Mississippi, and, in many respects, a fit exemplar to the nations of the whole earth.

The birth and legal maturity of such a Commonwealth are surely worthy of public commemoration. As Kentuckians, we should make periodical offerings of thanksgiving to God and of gratitude to our pioneer fathers and mothers for our enviable allotments in this age of light and in this land of liberty, plenty, and hope. Every nation leaves, on its pathway behind, some lasting memorial which it should never forget or neglect—some green spots in the waste of the past, around which memory lingers with ennobling emotions. And to commemorate, with grateful hearts, great national events, either glorious or beneficent, is a double offering on the altar of patriotism and the altar of God. Few incidents in the history of nations have been more useful or can be more memorable than that of the first settlement of Kentucky by our own race—few have been more eventful—and not one exhibits more of romance or of those qualities and deeds deemed chivalrous and noble among men. And the adoption of Kentucky's organic law and her admission into the federo-national union of Anglo-American States, constitute an appropriate episode to the thrilling epic of her Herculean infancy. Our own interests, duty to the generations that shall succeed us, and respect for the memory of our illustrious predecessors—call Kentuckians, one and all, to the consecration of an occasional day or days to the becoming celebration of those two most interesting events in our local history. And let these *Kentuckiad*s—like the

saturnalia of the Romans, the *Passovers* of the Jews, and the *Olympiads* of the Greeks—be sacred seasons when all, of every rank and denomination, animated by the same pervading sentiments and communing as one family, may refresh their patriotism, revive their mutual good will, fortify their civic virtues, and improve their social graces.

This, my countrymen, is a monumental land. Modern, as it is, in authentic history, it is covered with monuments of a remote antiquity—memorials, not only of successive generations of long extinct vegetables and animals whose transformed relics fill and fertilize the earth beneath us, but also of a race or races of men as far advanced perhaps in knowledge and the arts of social life as their contemporaries of Europe, Asia, or Africa; but of whose origin, history, or doom, no tradition remains. It contains monuments also of more recent races less civilized, and by whom the more ancient and enlightened inhabitants may have been exterminated or absorbed, as Southern Europe once was, and perhaps about the same time, by wandering tribes of Northern barbarians. But our fathers have covered it with monuments far more legible and enduring—monuments of heroism, of rapid civilization, and of civil and religious liberty. It is itself a vast monument. By its central position as the heart of North America—its stupendous cliffs and labyrinths—its genial climate—its unsurpassed fertility—its physical beauty and magnificence—its institutions, its population, and its deeds—God has made it an everlasting monument as enduring as its own mountains and far more interesting than the Towers and Pyramids of the old world. And may we, of this generation, leave behind *us* memorials worthy of our country and our age.

Sites of large cities of the Cyclopean style—fragments of brick structures—metallic utensils and coins—ruins of gigantic fortifications, temples, and cemeteries—perfect petrifications of human beings of the *Caucasian* form, with the accustomed habiliments of the civilized dead—all disinterred after a sleep of many centuries—prove, beyond dispute, that our continent was once the theatre of a crowded population resembling, and probably equaling, the most civilized of their contemporaries of the transatlantic world. When or whence those buried and forgotten nations came to America we have no clue for determining with historic certainty. If, as may be probable, any of them were superior to

the *Itzacs*—who, emigrating probably from the neighborhood of the *Caspian* sea, built *Merico* and *Cusco*—they may have been *Carthaginians*, *Phœnicians*, *Phocians*, or *Etruscans*—all of the *Pelasgian* race—or probably *Danes*; all of which nations navigated the Atlantic Ocean, and the last of whom had planted settlements in the New England States at least twelve centuries ago. Modern geology, which discloses the history of the earth and vegetation and irrational animals for thousands of years, is dumb as to our own race, of whom there is no fossil fragment in any of the stratifications of the globe. Nor, whilst it proves, beyond question, that this whole continent was once covered by an ocean of water, does it intimate the origin, character, or destiny of the more enlightened people who lived on it after its emergence and long before the discovery of it by *Cabot*.

Their tale is untold. Were it known, it would doubtless be interesting and eventful. Ages ago, Kentucky may have been the busy theatre of incidents and catastrophes in the drama of civil and social life, of which a *Hesiod*, a *Homer*, and *Virgil* might have sung with immortal melody. It is said that, when Alexander saw the hillocks supposed to contain the bones of Achilles and Patroclus, he sighed because he too had not, like them, a *Homer* to canonise his name.

May not Kentucky, centuries back, have had its Achilles and Patroclus, and Hector, and Helen, and Troy—its Marathon, its Athens, its Delphi, and its Parnassus—its Theseus, its Solon, its Socrates, its Epaminondas, its Themistocles, its Demosthenes—its wars, its friendships, its loves, and its human woes? But of these no *Homer* sang, and all is now desolation and oblivion. Whilst we tread on the ruins of generations unknown, all that history tells of Kentucky's past may be embraced in the narrow span of one century.

Long prior to the immigration of our ancestors, Kentucky had been depopulated, and,—covered with majestic forests and luxuriant cane,—had become the hunting ground of various tribes of savages and the theatre of bloody conflicts between them. And, from those circumstances, it derived its name—*Kantuckee*,—in Indian dialect being, “the dark and bloody ground.” Though embraced constructively within the chartered limits of Virginia under James's grant of 1609, yet it was also claimed by France—both England and France claiming a great portion of North Amer-

ica by alleged prior discovery, which, according to the conventional law of Christendom, gave to a Christian nation dominion over any unchristian country which it first discovered. These conflicting claims of England and France not being adjusted until their treaty of 1763, the uncertainty of title, the remoteness of the territory, and the perils and privations incident to a colonization of it retarded its exploration and settlement until after that peace had been concluded. Some wandering Frenchmen, as well as Virginians, had occasionally had earlier glimpses of it, and made glowing reports of its fertility and beauty. But it remained unappropriated by the hand of civilization until the year 1767, when *George Washington*, afterwards commander-in-chief and President of the United States, visited the Eastern portion of it, and, under the proclamation of '63, made two surveys, chiefly within its limits, on Sandy, in the name of *John Fry*, the Colonel of the regiment, of which, in the war of '53, he himself was *Lieut. Colonel*. These surveys, like every thing else attempted by Washington, were perfectly made and reported, so that every line and corner have been easily identified. They were the first surveys ever made within the limits of our present state—and thus Washington was one of the first "hunters of Kentucky." Finley and others, of North Carolina, having, in the same year of 1767, explored the best northern portions of the territory, and returned with alluring accounts, *Daniel Boone* of the same state, the *Nimrod* of the day, was induced to come and look at it for himself in 1769. He was so charmed with the beauty and sublimity of its landscape, the melody and fragrance of its forests, and the variety and abundance of its wild game, as to linger in its solitudes, generally alone, for two years. In 1770, in escaping from Indians who killed one of his brothers by his side on Boone's creek in the present county of Clarke, he lost his hunting knife, which was found in 1822, and is now in the historic cabinet at Washington city. In 1773-4, several surveys were made near "the falls," and on Elkhorn and the Kentucky river under the proclamation of '63. And, in the fall of the year 1774, James Harrod of Monongehala, with about 60 others who were in "*the battle of the point*," built some cabins where Harrodsburgh now stands, and returned home with the intention of removing to them, which some of them did in the fall of 1775. Boone had come with his family as far as Holstein, was at Wataga in March 1775, and, having there as-

sisted in negotiating the contract whereby the Cherokees, who claimed all the territory south of the Kentucky river, sold to Col. Henderson of North Carolina, their title thereto, he was employed by the purchaser to open the first Kentucky road—(from Cumberland Gap to that river,) which being soon completed by blazing trees and calling the designated route a trace, he commenced, about the middle of April, 1775, the erection of a log fortification on the southern bank of the river, at a place since called Boonsborough, and which was finished in June of the same year. Thus it is almost certain that, whilst the first revolutionary guns were thundering on the 19th of April, at Lexington, Massachusetts, in the cause of National Independence, the pioneer axe was resounding among the cliffs of Kentucky in the work of rearing the first modern fortress for founding and guarding civilization in this hesperian wilderness. The fortress being completed, Boone removed to it with his wife and daughters early in September, 1775.—These were the first civilized females who ventured to settle in Kentucky. Without the co-operation of the gentler sex, the settlement would never have been made. *Woman* was the guardian angel of the wild and perilous forest. And never, on earth, was the poet's conception of her value more perfectly exemplified—for it was here truly seen and felt that—

“The world was sad, the garden was a wild,
“And man the *Hermit* sighed, till woman *smiled.*”

The anniversary of the first advent to Kentucky of Christian woman, by whom our State has since been so signally adorned and blessed, should itself be commemorated with grateful hearts. She was the tutelar genius of our first settlements—She has been the foster mother of the domestic virtues which have hallowed our hearths and graced our society—and She it was that fired the heart of Kentucky patriotism and nerved the arm of Kentucky chivalry.

In 1776 many improvements were made preparatory to ultimate residence, and of such a character as merely to identify the selected spots as those intended for occupancy and cultivation.—Until the year 1777 all this cis-montanian territory of Virginia was embraced in the county of Fincastle, and was virtually in a state of nature, without any local jurisprudence or organized administration of justice. But the county of Kentucky, coterminous with our state, having been established about the close of the

year 1776, early in 1777 the new county was organized and a court of Quarter Sessions was opened in March, at Harrodsburgh. And of that first Kentucky court of justice, *Levi Todd* was the first clerk.

As the Revolutionary war was raging, and no law had been passed for the appropriation of land on this side of the mountains, the settlement of this country did not increase very rapidly before the year 1779, when "*the land law*" was enacted. Having always asserted full dominion over all the territory within her chartered limits, conceding to the savage occupants the usufruct merely, Virginia declared illegal and void the purchase by Col. Henderson, and another also by Col. Donaldson, from the Six Nations, of the territory north of the Kentucky river, all of which was claimed by those tribes. But, considering those purchases valid for the purpose of divesting the aboriginal title, our parent state claimed the absolute right to the entire territory as a trust resulting to her from the illegal contracts, which were deemed void so far only as they purported to vest beneficial interests in the individual purchasers who had made contracts with Indians in violation of a statute prohibiting all such purchases. Thus claiming the use of the land, as well as jurisdiction over it, the Legislature, in 1779, enacted a statute, commonly called "*the land law*," authorizing, in prescribed modes, individual appropriations of land in Kentucky. This beneficent enactment brought to this country, during the fall and winter of that year, an unexampled tide of immigrants, who, exchanging all the comforts of their native society and homes, for settlements for themselves and children here, came like pilgrims to a wilderness to be made secure by their arms and habitable by the toil of their lives. Through privations incredible and perils thick, thousands of men, women, and children, came in successive caravans forming continuous streams of human beings, horses, cattle, and other domestic animals, all moving onward along a lonely and houseless path to a wild and cheerless land. Cast your eyes back on that long procession of missionaries in the cause of civilization. Behold the men on foot, with their trusty guns on their shoulders, driving stock and leading packhorses—and the women, some walking with pails on their heads, others riding with children in their laps and other children swung in baskets on horses fastened to the tails of others going before. See them encamped at night expecting to be massacred by Indians—behold

them, in the month of December, in that ever memorable season of unprecedented cold, called "*the hard winter*," travelling two and three miles a day, frequently in danger of being frozen or killed by the falling of horses on the icy and almost impassable trace, and subsisting only on stinted allowances of stale bread and meat; but now, lastly, look at them as they reach the destined fort, perhaps on the eve of merry Christmas, met by the hearty welcome of friends who had come before, and cheered with fresh buffalo meat and parched corn, they rejoice at their deliverance, and resolve to be contented with their lots.

This is no vision of the imagination. It is but an imperfect description of the pilgrimage of my own father and mother, and of many others, who settled in Kentucky in December, 1779. When, resting from their journey, they looked at the cheerless home of their choice and remembered, with sighs, the kindred and comforts left behind in the sunny land of their youth—they were yet consoled by trust in the martyr's God, and animated by the rainbow of hope which gilded the dark firmament lowering over the unchinked cabins which scarcely sheltered their heads. Blest be the memory of the patriarchal band; blest forever be the land ennobled by their virtues and consecrated by their blood; and blest be their children and their children's children, both in this life and in that to come.

The land law provided—that all persons who had settled themselves or others in the country in good faith antecedently to the 1st of January, 1778, should be entitled to 400 acres including each settlement, at the price of \$2 50 for each hundred acres; that all who, in like manner, had settled in villages should be entitled, collectively, to 640 acres for their town, and individually to 400 acres each at the same price of \$2 50 for each hundred acres; that such as had settled since the 1st of January, 1778, should be entitled to a pre-emption of 400 acres including each settlement on paying for each hundred acres £40 in paper money, then equal to about \$40; that such as had, before the 1st of January, 1778, chosen any vacant land and marked it or built a house or made any other improvement on it, should be entitled, for the same price of £40 per hundred, to a pre-emption of 1,000 acres for each improvement; that, to every settlement right a pre-emptive right to an additional 1,000 acres, at the government price of £40 in paper money for each hundred acres, should be

attached so as to adjoin the settlement survey; and that, independently of any pre-emption claim, any person might procure a treasury warrant for any quantity at the said State price, to be located by his own direction.

Settlement and village claims were to be adjusted by commissioners appointed by Virginia, whose first session was on the 13th of October, 1779, at Logan's Station, near the present village of Stanford, and whose first certificate of title, dated the next day, was granted to *Isaac Shelby*, (the first Governor of Kentucky) for "a settlement and pre-emption, of 1,400 acres, for raising corn in 1776" near the Knob Lick, about five miles south of Danville, where he afterwards resided and died.

The settlement of Kentucky was not the only aim of the land law of 1779. Unfortunately for the repose of the first settlers, *Revenue* was Virginia's principal object. She issued warrants for more land than she had, and the best lands were covered by successive appropriations. This was the fault of the law, which not only permitted each claimant to make his own entry, but required each location to be made with so much precision as to enable subsequent locator to appropriate, without collision, the adjacent residuum. This last provision was judicially construed as requiring notoriety, actual or potential, in the locative calls, and an identity between the entry, survey, and patent. Unluckily, the courts decided also that an older grantee might be compelled, by a court of equity, to relinquish his legal title to a junior claimant under the better entry; and that a subsequent locator, whose entry was constructively certain and good, should be preferred to a prior locator whose entry did not possess, *at its date*, the prescribed notoriety or requisite identity, even though the subsequent appropriator knew, or might, by reasonable enquiry, have known, *when he made his entry*, that he was encroaching on a prior appropriation.

These anomalous rules and doctrines operated unjustly to individuals and injuriously to the prosperity and peace of Kentucky. They produced vexatious and protracted litigation involving, for many years, most of the original titles—and that litigation generally resulted to the loss, and often the ruin, of the earlier appropriators, who had neither the craft nor the foresight necessary for eluding the legal net woven by avaricious or unskilful legislators, cunning lawyers, and metaphysical courts. Many, perhaps most,

of the advanced guard who rescued the country, were supplanted by voracious speculators.

Boone was one of the most conspicuous of these victims. Of the many tracts of rich land for which he had obtained titles, it is not certainly known that he was permitted to hold one foot. Like *Moses*, he led the pilgrim army—and, like him, he saw but never enjoyed the promised land.

The Indian tribes, who had claimed the territory as their own, denying the validity of the contracts purporting to cede their titles to Henderson and Donaldson—and many other tribes—of which the Shawanees were the most ferocious—claiming it as common hunting ground—these combined savages determined to prevent the occupation of it by “the long knife,” as they characterized the white men; and, by persevering massacres of the early immigrants on their way to the country and after others had reached it, they endeavored to nip the settlement in its bud. This savage crusade against civilization was prosecuted in the settlements of Kentucky until after Clark’s campaign, in 1782, and on the borders of the Ohio until Wayne’s treaty at Greenville, in 1795. Prior to the treaty of Independence in 1783, neither the confederation nor any of the States contributed any efficient aid to the spartan band of isolated pioneers who encountered alone all the horrors of exterminating war with numerous tribes of savages. In that bloody struggle even the children were soldiers and the women all heroines. The husband, with his rifle, had to guard his wife whilst she milked their cow; and the lonely mother and her children often defended their cabin against unsparing assaults at night. Day after day, and night after night, families were surprised and slaughtered—companies of immigrants massacred—stations attacked—bloody battles fought—and captives taken and either rescued, or butchered, or burned at the stake.

The horrible massacres at Martin’s and Kincheloe’s Stations—“the defeated camps,” where a large company of men, women, and children, were nearly all slaughtered in their tents on the wilderness trace, in 1781; and when, in the darkness and chilling rain to which a fugitive mother had escaped undressed, a child was born whom many of us knew in manhood’s prime:—the assault on the cabin of Mrs. Woods, near the Crab Orchard, in 1782—the bloody encounter between an Indian, who had forced an entrance, and her negro man—the attempts of other Indians

to cut down her door--their repulse by her pointing through a crack a gun barrel used as a poker—and her finally cutting off the Indian's head with a broadax, whilst he and her slave were lying side by side fighting on the floor :—the capture of Miss Calloway and Miss Boone, at Boonsborough, in 1776—the pursuit by their parents, one of whom (Boone) subscribed an oath that he would rescue the children, if alive, or die in the effort—the instinctive sagacity of the captives in leaving shreds of their handkerchiefs and dresses as signals of their course and of the encouraging fact that they still lived—the anxiety of the pursuing fathers when, surveying the camp of the sleeping captors, they beheld their daughters lying arm in arm—the solicitude of those children when, shortly afterwards, they saw their fathers themselves hopeless prisoners, tied to trees, facing tomahawks uplifted to slay them—and the mutual joy of parents and children when, at that awful moment, a fire from friends who had followed in the pursuit dispersed the savages and rescued the captives who were soon in each other's arms weeping with pious joy for their providential deliverance :—The capture of Simon Kenton, and his rescue from the fire of the stake by the renegado, Simon Girty, who, hating his race, had become a leader of Indians, and more cruel than any of them, yet, in this instance, illustrated the triumphant strength of schoolboy associations; for he and Kenton had played together when they were boys, and, recognizing the familiar face just as the incendiary was igniting the funeral pile of faggots, he instinctively cried *stop!*—and the bloody hand was stayed :—The attack, by more than one hundred Indians, on Capt. Hubbal's boat as it descended the Ohio with his family—his chivalrous defence until the blood gushed over the tops of his boots, and his successful resistance even then, and final victory by repelling the assailants with billets of wood until, coming in sight of Limestone, they ceased their efforts to board with their canoes and paddled off, leaving the noble immigrant and his blood-stained boat to float alone, a monument of valor never surpassed :—The many captures of women and children—the burning of infants or the crushing of their heads against trees in the presence of their mothers—the detention in savage bondage of men, women, and children for years—and the burning of many at the stake, ornamented with the scalps of their friends :—These were some of the scenes of peril and blood which characterized the first settlement of Kentucky by our race.

Battles too were fought as gloriously as those of Thermopyle and the Grampian Hills. Who does not remember, with honest pride, the traditions of the heroic and successful defence of Boonsborough, and Harrodsburgh, and of Logan's and Bryant's Stations? And where is the heart that does not glow with admiration at the recital of the romantic incidents which signalized these and many other as memorable occasions in our short but eventful history? One only may illustrate the spirit of all of them. Nearly 400 Indians, lying concealed around Logan's Station, surprised and shot down one of its few defenders who, at the dawn of day, had passed the puncheon stockade in quest of the cows—and then, with savage yells, they attacked the fort; while pouring their rifle balls like hail upon the humble fortress, the wounded man, between two fires, raised himself on his hands and knees, but, unable to stand, he could not escape. Col. *Benjamin Logan*, observing this imploring scene, exclaimed—"boys who will go and help our wounded friend?" Several made the attempt, but were driven back by the enemy's balls; at last Logan himself nobly ran to his relief and, lifting him on his shoulders, carried him safely in untouched by one of the hundreds of bullets aimed at their heads.

"*Estill's defeat*," near Mountsterling, on the 20th of March, 1782, was as glorious as disastrous. More skill and courage were never displayed on a battle field than Capt. Estill and his associates that day exhibited and sealed with the blood of all and the lives of the leader and many of his men. At the time of that ever memorable battle, "*Estill's Station*" was occupied and to be defended by women and children, and my own father, who was then lying there disabled by severe wounds received from Indians a few days before.

And in "the Blue Lick defeat," August the 20th, 1782, the cormorant of death fed greedily on the flower of the first settlement. On that darkest of their gloomy days every settler lost a friend, and nearly every family a prop. And, on that bloody field, the noble Cols. Todd and Trigg, the chivalrous Capt. Harlan, and the gallant son of Boone, lay undistinguished among the promiscuous slain, all soon mangled by devouring wolves and vultures so as not to be recognized by their friends who, three days after the battle, buried the fragments. A few of their crumbling bones, since collected by their countrymen, now lie exposed to the ele-

ments, in a confused pile, on the summit of the bleak and rocky plain where the heroes fell. We cannot now imagine the grief and despondence with which the mournful intelligence of that day's catastrophe covered the land. But the survivors, though woefully bereaved, were not to be discouraged or dismayed. They were resolved never to look back or falter in their first and last resolve to conquer the wilderness or die in the attempt. *Israel's God* stood by and sustained the noble but forlorn band—for their cause was his. On the long roll of that day's reported slain were the names of a few who had, in fact, been captured and, after surviving the ordeal of the gauntlet, had been permitted to live as captives. Among these was an excellent husband and father who, with eleven other captives, had been taken by a tribe painted black as the signal of torture and death to all. The night after the battle, these twelve prisoners were stripped and placed in a line on a log—he to whom we have specially alluded being at one extremity of the devoted row. The cruel captors, then beginning at the other end, slaughtered eleven, one by one; but, when they came to the only survivor, though they raised him up also and drew their bloody knives to strike under each uplifted arm, they paused and, after a long pow-wow, spared his life—why, he never knew. For about a year none of his friends, excepting his faithful wife, doubted his death. She, hoping against reason, still insisted that he lived and would yet return to her. Wooed by another, she, from time to time, postponed the nuptials, declaring that she could not divest herself of the belief that her husband survived. Her expostulating friends finally succeeding in their efforts to stifle her affectionate instinct, she reluctantly yielded, and the nuptial day was fixed. But just before it dawned the crack of a rifle was heard near her lonely cabin—at the familiar sound, she leaped out, like a liberated fawn, ejaculating as she sprang—"that's John's gun!" It was John's gun sure enough; and, in an instant, she was, once more, in her lost husband's arms. But, nine years afterwards, that same husband fell in "St. Clair's defeat"—and the same disappointed, but persevering, lover renewed his suit—and, at last, the widow became his wife. The scene of those romantic incidents was within gunshot of my natal homestead; and with that noble wife and matron I was myself well acquainted.

Almost every spot of earth within the limits of our State has been consecrated by some romantic adventure or personal tragedy; and were I to speak of these remarkable incidents of our early history until this day's setting sun, I could scarcely have begun the moving tale of Kentucky's first settlement by those whose blood still flows through our own hearts. The few facts we have briefly recited are but a sample of countless events equally interesting and far above the power of adequate description by the pen or tongue of man.

But peril, privation and death, could neither extirpate the settlement nor prevent its progressive increase. And, in 1783, two auspicious events occurred—the treaty of peace with England, and the subdivision of Kentucky county into the counties of Lincoln, Fayette and Jefferson, and the organization of a District court with criminal as well as civil jurisdiction. Of that first local court of general jurisdiction, John Floyd and Samuel McDowell were the first Judges, John May the first Clerk, and Walker Daniel the first prosecuting attorney. Its first session was at Harrodsburgh, March the 3d, 1783; but it was permanently fixed at Danville by a contract with the Clerk and Attorney General, the proprietors of the land, who agreed to erect, of logs, the public buildings.

As early as 1784, the population had become so confident of its capacity to govern and defend itself, as to desire a separation from Virginia; and, in that year, a Convention was held at Danville preparatory to the establishment of an independent government. But a disagreement with the parent State as to the terms of separation frustrated the object of that and other successive conventions, until Virginia having, in 1789, assented on prescribed terms ratified by a Convention at Danville in 1790, Congress passed an act, February the 4th, 1791, admitting Kentucky into the Union prospectively, on the 1st of June, 1792. And, on the 19th of April, 1792—*the 17th anniversary of the battle of Lexington*—the first Constitution of Kentucky was adopted. Isaac Shelby, the first Governor, arrived in Lexington (the temporary seat of government) June the 4th, 1792, and a quorum of the Legislature, there convened on the 5th, having elected Alexander S. Bul-lit President of the Senate, and Robert Breckinridge Speaker of the House of Representatives, received the first Executive com-

munication, read to them in joint meeting by the Governor in person, in imitation of the practice of Washington, as President of the United States.

It was perhaps lucky that Kentucky was kept in a state of pupilage and dependence until after the adoption of the Federal Constitution. Her own constitution is probably much better than it would have been had she adopted one before 1788. Her detached position—the non-surrender of the Northwestern posts, as stipulated by the treaty of 1783, in consequence of which the Indians were instigated to persevering hostilities—the occlusion by Spain of the Mississippi river below the 31st degree of latitude—and a general, but unjust suspicion, that the federal government was inattentive, perhaps indifferent to Western interests—had generated a spirit of distrust and disaffection which might possibly have been exasperated to the extremity of final alienation had Kentucky, as an independent state, possessed the power to act as she might have willed, before she was covered by the panoply of the National Union of 1788. But rescued, either by Virginia or her own good sense, from the vortex of absolute self-dependence or foreign alliance, she now stands a Doric column in the American temple of Union. Although she was not, in fact, an integral member of the Union quite as soon as Vermont, yet, as the act of Congress prospectively admitting her, without qualification or restriction except as to time, was the first of the kind enacted by Congress, we claim for our own native Commonwealth the honor of primogeniture. And may she long continue to enjoy and deserve her birthright, and be the last to soil or surrender the blessed national motto of her own flag—“UNITED, WE STAND—DIVIDED, WE FALL.”

The adoption of a political constitution, and such a constitution, in the wilds of Kentucky by the free will of a majority of its free inhabitants, was a novel and interesting spectacle. The first constitution, the production principally of George Nicholas, was a very good one—certainly equal, if not superior, to any other State Constitution then existing. As it provided for another convention at the end of seven years, a new constitution was adopted in 1799. Both constitutions were alike—in outline the same. The last is more popular in its provision for the election of Governor, and less so in the mode of selecting sheriffs and clerks; and the

first secured more stability to the judiciary by prohibiting, like the federal constitution, any reduction of salary during the tenure of judicial office. There may be reason to doubt whether, altogether, the last is better than the first. But the fundamental law of Kentucky, as it is, recognizes the cardinal principles of the declaration of independence of July the 4th, 1776—distributes all political power among their co-ordinate departments of representative magistracy—divides the legislative council, intending one branch to operate, when proper, as a check on the passion or inconsiderateness of the other—secures the elective franchise to all free, white, male citizens twenty one years old—and provides a strong anchorage of stability in prescribing, as the only lawful mode of revocation or alteration, such an one as secures the dispassionate exercise of reason by a greater number of citizens than that which will ever vote on the grave question of a new convention. Kentucky pioneers seem to have well understood—what the wise men of antiquity and even of modern Europe never knew—the conservative principles of safe, just, and practicable democracy. Our State Constitution is an organized model of those principles. The ultimate object of the entire structure was to secure fundamental rights, not to the numerical majority who, but seldom, if ever, can need such extraneous support, but to the minority and each individual against the passions or injustice of the major party—to assure the predominance of reason over passion, knowledge over ignorance, and moral over brute force; to prevent a mischievous prevalence of factious designs and of hasty or inconsiderate public opinion; in fine, to secure the blessings of democracy, unalloyed with its curses, by organizing political sovereignty in such a manner as to deprive each citizen of so much of natural liberty as would be inconsistent with the practical supremacy of just and equal laws, and, at the same time, secure to each, against the governing party, as much of natural right as it can be the end of the best State government to guarantee. In every breath it repudiates the suicidal doctrine that the will of the actual majority—unsanctioned by the constitution or *expressed otherwise than that requires*—is law, or should be respected as a rule of conduct, or of right. And, *in organizing the representative principle, it was the great aim of our fathers to secure to legislation a degree of responsibility, deliberation, and knowledge,*

which the constituent mass, under the most favorable circumstances, could never be expected to embody. And in this way they intended to make legislation the safe work of reason and deliberation, and not the monstrous offspring of the passions or inconsiderate emotions of an impatient or irresponsible multitude. Thus only can “*vox populi*” be “*vox dei*.”

Though complex in structure, yet, in its practical operation, according to its true theory, this constitution exhibits an admirable simplicity and rare wisdom. And its wonderful philosophy and beauty appear in this pervading characteristic—that, whilst it recognizes the ultimate authority of the popular will, it intends that the representative functionaries in each department of sovereign power, and especially in two of them, shall, by faithfully acting according to their own honest and enlightened judgments, arrest the tide of passion or ignorance until the constituent body shall have had sufficient time for thorough investigation and dispassionate conclusions, but that, after the public mind shall have been thus distilled through the constitutional ordeal, and not before, its final judgment should be deemed the highest attainable evidence of right, and should, of course, then be supreme. *This is the principle and the end of the entire frame and all its checks.*

This theory, if observed in practice, will exalt representative democracy; any other must always, as hitherto, prostitute and degrade it. A constitution less guarded or more democratic than that of Kentucky would authorize licentiousness and tend to anarchy, the most oppressive despotism, and the ultimate destruction of democracy itself. Let our public functionaries all feel the true spirit of our constitution and of their stations, and always act upon a comprehensive and elevated consideration of their responsibility to the whole constituency on whom their acts will operate, and to their own deliberate judgments, and to God—and, as long as they shall thus fill their places and discharge their duties, and no longer, our ark of liberty may save us all from every storm and every flood. One of its best features is that which secures its own stability. Without this, it would not effectually operate as a supreme law; for, if the majority could abolish or change it at pleasure, it would be no more inviolable or fundamental than an act of ordinary legislation. Our fathers, wise and prudent, were not willing to trust all their or our rights to the will of a majority

without imposing on that majority itself such restrictions as would afford a satisfactory guaranty against a capricious or unjust abuse of power. Such is the organic law made for themselves and their posterity. Honest men made it, and it may last and bless as long as men equally honest minister at its altars, in its own pure spirit. But it is a chart of one only of a constellation of republics, each revolving in its own orbit round a common centre, and altogether constituting, for all purposes common to all, one pervading, comprehensive, supreme Commonwealth. A confederation of independent sovereigns is not the union into which Kentucky was admitted as a member. Her union is national to the extent of all national interests, and federal only so far as her own local interests are exclusively involved. She arrogates no authority, as a State, to control rights or interests common to her co-states, nor does she admit the authority of any of them to decide for her on any right or interest of hers. As to all national concerns, whether foreign or domestic—all things essential to the maintenance of the harmony, justice, and integrity of the Union, to its nationality and ultimate national supremacy—she had, by the act of becoming a party to the Constitution of the United States, wisely surrendered all her sovereignty to the common government, instituted for the sole purpose of preserving that sacred Union by regulating and controlling all those great interests which no one State could regulate or control consistently with the rights of others. It was in the cause of that union that Kentucky has often raised her arm and shed her blood—and to preserve it in its purity and original design will she not, if ever necessary, spill the last drop that animates her patriotic heart? “Yes,” is the response of those nodding plumes.

Such is the constitution and such are the principles handed down to us by the generation that is gone or fast going away. The spirits of the dead and the prayers of the yet living conjure us to defend them.

The power and value of our local constitution have been severely tried; and never more signally than in the violent controversies about a “new election” of Governor in 1816-17—and “relief” and “new court” from 1822 to 1827—each of which agitated our State almost to civil convulsion, and in both of which the sober intelligence of the people finally prevailed over the ear-

lier impulses of passion and the promptings of partisan leaders, which, had they not been checked in the first case by a firm and honest Senate, and in the last by a pure and enlightened judiciary, would, as almost all now admit, have trampled under the feet of an excited majority some of the most important provisions of the organic law. Our Senators and Supreme Judges then firmly and nobly performed the task allotted to them by the constitution, by faithfully doing what their departments were organized to effect. They did not follow the too contagious example of illustrious demagogues by stifling their own consciences, prostituting their own judgments, and committing treason to the constitution and their stations, in subservience to the passions and submission to the clamor of the unreflecting multitude. They saved the constitution and commended the cause of constitutional democracy. Any other course by such functionaries must always tend to unhinge the constitution—to destroy its stability—to pervert its spirit—and finally, to subvert democracy itself.

Our legislation has generally been consistent with our constitution and promotive of the public welfare. But the besetting sin of partial enactments, and of hasty, crude, and excessive legislation, has sometimes stained our legislative history; and in no class of cases more frequently than that of Divorces of husband and wife, in which, since 1805, but *never before*, our legislatures have, in many cases, seemed to assume the judicial function granted exclusively to the judiciary by the most important provision of the constitution.

But, under her State Constitution, essentially as it is, Kentucky has already grown to a matured and distinguished Republic—matured in Knowledge, in social organization, and in physical improvement—and distinguished for lofty patriotism and eminent talents in peace and in war. Her arm never hesitated—her voice never faltered in the cause of constitutional liberty and union. She has often sealed her patriotism with her richest blood. By the victory of Orleans Kentuckians gloriously contributed to immortalize Kentucky valor and their federal leader's name—and by their gallant support of the lamented Harrison in the Northwestern campaigns of the last war, they made him, too, President of the United States. How many more Presidents she may give to the nation, from her own bosom, time alone can disclose. Al-

ready two of her sons are enrolled among the distinguished few from whom the approaching choice is to be made: and she has many more who are qualified for the same distinction. By her principles, her conduct, and her high moral power, Kentucky, though only fifty one years old, has acquired an exalted and priceless character, and, having contributed to the population and strength of other and younger Commonwealths, is now honored by the significant title of "OLD KAINTUCK." Her blood is good. The richest of this noble blood flowed in the veins of our untitled pioneers, than whom a more heroic, hardy, and honest race of men and women never gave birth and fortune to any nation on earth. As to this world's trash they were poor enough; they had no blazoned heraldry, and but little of scholastic lore. But they were blessed with robust health, sound heads, and pure hearts—practical sense, simple and industrious habits, dauntless courage, social equality, virtuous education, and habitual reverence for human and divine law. These were the elements of our first social organization and civil state. Better never existed. What a generation was Kentucky's first! Who could be so falsely proud as to be ashamed of such an ancestry? Who among us would prefer to trace his pedigree to a nobler stock? To that primitive race—to that "*root out of dry ground*"—are we indebted, not only for our present comforts, but for all those qualities which have most honorably distinguished the name of "Kentuckian." Let us never prove ourselves unworthy of our origin.

Most of the pilgrim band who made the first footsteps of civilization on our virgin soil, have consecrated by their bones the land of their choice. Many of them lived long enough to enjoy the first fruits of their toils—a few—but very few—survivors yet linger here and there among us as monuments of the memorable age that is past, and of the noble race that is almost gone. This venerable group deserves a passing tribute.

SURVIVING FATHERS AND MOTHERS OF KENTUCKY'S DAWN!—we salute you as the honored relics of eventful days to our country and to us which we, your posterity, never saw. Yet spared by Providence to commemorate the adventures of the hey-day of your youth, may you still be permitted to gleam forth, yet a little while longer, the light of the generation now gone before you, and also to bless the children who may live after you.

You feel this day what none but you can feel. You saw Kentucky in her native wildness. You well remember the many-fold difficulties you met and overcame. You remember the friends you have lost and the children you have buried. You now review the scenes of your dark and bloody days—look around for the companions of your sufferings and triumphs, and sigh that they are gone and you alone here. But you live to reap the rich harvest sowed by your sweat and your blood. You behold Kentucky as she is now before the middle of the nineteenth century and contrast her with what she was in the last quarter of the eighteenth. Full of years and full of honor, you bless God for what you have been and all you have suffered and seen. May you still be permitted to live until you can know that the fruits of your lives will long bless the country and the children you must soon leave behind. And then, in the light of that bright assurance, may each of you, as your last earthly moment approaches, be able to say from the heart—“now Lord lettest thou thy servant depart in peace—for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

But among you here is one—the lonely trunk of four generations—to whom the heart of filial gratitude and love must speak out one emotion to-day—*Venerable and beloved MOTHER!* How often have we heard from your maternal lips the story of Kentucky’s romantic birth—of “*the hard winter of ’79*”—of all the achievements and horrors of those soul-rending days?

You have known this land in all its phases. You have suffered with those that suffered most, and sympathised with those who have rejoiced in well-doing and the prospect before them. You have long survived the husband, who came with you and stood by you in your gloomiest, as well as your brightest days, and has long slept with buried children of your love.—And now, the sole survivor of a large circle of cotemporaneous kindred and juvenile friends—a solitary stock of *three hundred shoots*—with a mind scarcely impaired, you yet linger with us on earth only to thank Providence for his bounties and pray for the prosperity of your flock and the welfare of the land you helped to save and to bless. And when it shall, at last, be your lot to exchange this *Canaan* below for the better *Canaan* above, may you, on the great day of days, at the head of your

long line of posterity and in presence of the assembled universe, be able, with holy joy, to announce the glad tidings—"Here Lord are we and all the children thou hast ever given us."

But the ashes of many of the first settlers of Kentucky are scattered, my countrymen, in foreign lands. And those of the first Hunter, who named many of her rivers and creeks, lie undistinguished on the banks of the turbid Missouri whither he had removed as soon as Kentucky could stand alone, and where he died in 1820, with his old rifle by his side.

Yet though our favored land is not honored as the repository of the earthly remains of Daniel Boone, it was loved by him to the last. After exploring the richest portions of the great west in the same virgin state he declared that, *all in all, there was but one Kentucky.* That Kentucky, far more advanced in improvement than even Boone could have anticipated, is now ours. It was given to us by our fathers to be enjoyed, and improved, and transmitted to our children as an abode of plenty and peace, liberty and light.

This is indeed a rich inheritance. A child of the Revolution—born in the gloom of a then distant and bloody wilderness—our beloved Commonwealth is even now an illustrious monument of the wonderful progress of American civilization and of the beneficence of the American principles of human government, the 67th anniversary of whose public announcement to the world we this day commemorate. Look at her!—bright as the sun—beautiful as the morning—and hopeful as the seasons. Her lap is full—her arm strong—her head sound—eloquent her lips, and *true* her heart. Though young in years, she is old in wisdom and matured in all that dignifies and adorns a great State. Her policy, her arms and her eloquence, have swelled the volume of American renown; her soldiers, and her orators are admired in foreign lands: and she has a son, whose eloquence, diplomacy, and statesmanship are known throughout the civilized world, and who has been pre-eminently distinguished among the conscript fathers of our own union. Her faith, too, is as untarnished as her prowess is undoubted: and now, when ostensible bankruptcy and virtual repudiation of solemn obligations are but too fashionable among individuals and States, Kentucky has, as she ought, stood firm on her integrity, and, Kentuckian-like, her credit is full up to high water mark.

Yet, with all our blessings, there are some among us who complain of hard times, and appear to be dissatisfied with our self-denying policy and the present posture of our local affairs. Let them remember that the unsullied character of their State is every thing; and that, without *this*, there can be nothing earthly which honorable men could enjoy as they would wish. And let them also contrast their condition, whatever it may be, with that of our first settlers, and, when they remember that these repined not in their peculiar destitution—even in the hard winter of “’79”—they will surely feel rebuked for their unreflecting ingratitude to their noble predecessors and a kind Providence for their own comparatively enviable allotments.

But gratitude to our adventurous fathers and mothers, as well as duty to ourselves and posterity, demands that we should maintain and improve the blessings, physical, social, and civil, which we have inherited. The physical improvement of our State, great as it has been, is but just begun. We must persevere in prudent improvements for developing our latent resources, facilitating our intercourse, increasing our population, augmenting our wealth, and thus still adding to our local comforts and attractions.

It is our sacred duty to all the friends of liberty and equality, dead, living, or yet to be born, to maintain inviolate the supremacy of law, and especially fundamental law—and, as indispensable to this end, we must uphold that political and social organization which will afford the greatest security against the popular vices and passions which will afflict the Commonwealth even in its best estate. And must we not, as hitherto, resolutely maintain the union of the States, and, as indispensable to that end, the supremacy of national authority over national affairs? Will Kentucky ever be guilty of the suicidal act of rupturing the vital *Siamese* artery which unites our 26 States, as one in blood and destiny? One and all Kentuckians answer *no*—NEVER:—Ohio echoes “*never*;”—and “*never*” is reverberated from the Alleghany to the Rocky Mountains.

Our character and institutions can be maintained only by the virtues that produced them. It is moral power that makes a State free and truly great. It is this to which we are indebted for the glory and prosperity of Kentucky. Do we intend to pre-

serve and increase those national treasures? Then we must preserve and increase the stock of moral power left us by the generation we are succeeding. *Industry, public spirit, intelligence, simplicity of manners, charity, self-denial, and social equality*, are the elements of this conservative and ennobling power. And, instead of improvement, is there not danger of deterioration in all these particulars? We have more refinement, and luxury, and literature, but are we equal to our fathers and mothers in the sound and sturdy qualities that made Kentucky what she has been? Are there not general symptoms of physical degeneracy? May not the rising generation be the victims of a false pride and pernicious education, already too prevalent? We must correct the procedure. If we desire the honor, happiness, or health of our children, the reputation of our State, or the preservation of its civil liberty, we must change our systems of physical and moral education. Sound constitution, vigorous health, industrious habits, pure and fixed moral principles, and that sort of practical sagacity and rectitude which these produce, constitute the best of all human legacies. Without these blessings ancestral wealth or honor will generally curse rather than bless its unqualified recipient. With the wise and virtuous, the moral virtues that dignify and the rational graces that most adorn our nature are the tests of merit and the only passports to favor. Let us then be careful to imprint on the hearts of our children the cheering republican truth—

“The rank is but the Guina stamp,
The man’s the Gou’d for all that.”

Every child in the Commonwealth should be educated in such a manner as to enable them all to be good and useful citizens. This is not benevolence merely, but obvious policy. In a free State, where the majority govern, what social organization or code of human laws can secure the rights of all or of any unless the governing mass be intelligent and moral? And would not the rich lose more by the ignorance and vices of the undisciplined poor than the cost of any prudent system of universal enlightenment and amelioration? It is the interest of each and of all that every one should be acquainted with the elements of the useful arts and of natural, moral, and political science.

But of all laws, that of the *heart* is the most supreme among men; and the finger of God can alone effectually inscribe that law on the tablet of the mind. This is the only unfailing prop of just and secure democracy. But it is not the metaphysics of schools, nor the polemics of dogmatists, nor the belligerent theologies of sects, which exalt or save a State. It is the religion of the *heart*—pure, simple, and god-like—that *Christian religion*, which subdues bad passions, eradicates vicious propensities, and infuses humility, self-denial, and universal benevolence. This it is which equalizes and renovates social man and effectually guards all his rights, personal and political. Wherever it prevails liberty and peace abound: whenever it is absent or is mocked by scepticism or hypocrisy, anarchy and despotism must, sooner or later, be the people's doom.

Could the whole pioneer band, living and dead, now bless their own Kentucky by one valedictory counsel, they would, all with one voice, say to her—"Educate your children—all—all—and be "*sure to teach them right.* On this hangs the destiny of Kentucky, and, perhaps, that also of the American Union."

The last remnant of our sacred band of pioneers and that also of our revolutionary soldiers and statesmen is now, with trembling step, descending the final slope of their earthly pilgrimage to sleep with the compatriot friends who have gone before them: and soon, very soon, not one will be left behind to tell the story of their eventful lives or behold on earth the beautiful country blessed by their noble virtues and commended to Heaven by their dying prayers. But shall they ever die in the heart of Kentucky? When the last of the Patriarchs shall have returned to the dust, we may rear to their memory a towering pyramid of earth, on whose lofty summit the bald eagle may build its nest and hatch birds of liberty for ages—and that majestic mausoleum, pointing to the skies, may, centuries hence, sublimely stand alone the historic monument of our heroic age and heroic race. But is it not due to the memory of the past, as well as to the enjoyment of the present and the hopes of the future, to signalize our own wonderful age by other and more useful memorials which may attest, to succeeding generations, our own title to the gratitude of our posterity and our kind? Is it not our duty to our fathers, and to

ourselves, and to our children, and to all mankind, to preserve inviolate and to improve the rich deposite of moral and political truth and of moral and political organization left with us in trust for ourselves and our fellow men of every clime and of every succeeding age? And can this sacred duty be performed without maintaining the principles and practising the self-denying virtues of our glorious ancestors of our country's glorious age? And can we safely transmit the blessings of civil and religious liberty to our children or commend organized democracy to mankind unless, by faithful discipline and rational teaching, physical, moral and political, we train up those children in habits of truth, industry, and morality? If such wholesome discipline be neglected or parental authority be perverted by false pride or mistaken indulgence will not the legacy of self-government prove a curse rather than a blessing to the unworthy recipients to whom we are so anxious to bequeath it? Should we not, therefore, exalt our own age and prove ourselves worthy of the manyfold blessings we enjoy by cultivating and exemplifying all the social and civic virtues of truth, temperance, industry, justice, public spirit, parental fidelity, and submission to the laws of our country and of God? And, whilst we should ever maintain the integrity and stability of our institutions, should we not prudently repair, rectify and improve them so far as a wise experience may show that their great end requires modification and improvement? Without such occasional infusions of new elements of conservative vitality they might, in time, either explode or expire from decay. But if, *Argo-like*, they ever require renovation or repair, let them, *Argo-like*, still maintain their original identity; for the efficacy of our own fundamental laws depends on *sentiment*, at last. We all know how we love the ancient oak that sheltered our infancy, or the old armed chair that rocked our mother. Nor can we be unmindful of the fact that we feel more veneration for the work of our fathers than for that of our own hands; for we see daily exemplifications of the latin aphorism—“*vetera extollimus, recentium incuriosi.*” And what is it, so much as antiquity and historic glory, that has, so long and so wonderfully, secured the stability and supremacy of the old *statutes* of England which constitute all that is called the British constitution?

But the most glorious and enduring monument which can distinguish our age of enjoyment and peace is that which should testify that we have been faithful to our children and made them fit, in body, in habitude, and in mind, for the enjoyments and the works of civil liberty that await their entrance on the great theatre which we must soon leave.

Thus, and only thus, may we, of this generation, evince our gratitude to those of our countrymen who have gone before us, and secure the grateful remembrance of those who shall come after us. Thus Kentucky may discharge the duties of her seniority and local position in this great valley, and show, to her younger sisters of the west, the only pathway to safe liberty or true renown. And thus, too, in the ultimate moral ascendancy of this valley of hope that may be destined to teach the world, she may be instrumental in the redemption and regeneration of mankind. All this we might perhaps accomplish:—all this, therefore, we should attempt. Who knows that we might not make Kentucky, morally and politically, (as well as physically,) the heart of our Union, and thereby also, in time, the heart of the whole earth. Let us try. If we fail, yet the honest effort will be honorable. But if we succeed, everlasting glory is ours. And even if we or our children should be doomed to see the genius of constitutional democracy exiled from this land of its birth, we may be consoled by the hope that it will take refuge in some more congenial soil and propitious age; for what we have already felt and seen under the shadow of its wings assures us that its cause is the cause of Heaven and must finally prevail.

Whether we look to prophecy, the intimations of natural theology, or the wonderful events of the last half century, we have reason to hope that our race is destined to attain on earth a moral rectitude and elevation far more general and ennobling than any human excellence hitherto exhibited. Even now the progress of general amelioration is rapid and pervading. The average career of mankind is upward, as well as onward. Christianity, rational philosophy, and constitutional liberty, like an ocean of light, are rolling their united and resistless tide over the earth and may, ere long, cover it as the waters do the great deep. Doubtless there may yet be partial revulsions. But the general movement will, as we trust, be progressive, until the millennial sun shall rise in all the effulgence of universal day.

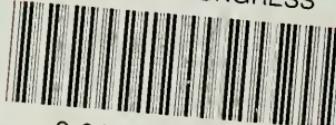
For that momentous day what shall we have done? And, when it comes, will that star-spangled banner still wave, with all its stripes and its stars, undimmed by time, and "E PLURIBUS UNUM" still emblazoned on its blue Heavens? And will that hallowed light beam on Kentucky's flag—and will that flag then, as now, bear on its folds the national motto—"United we stand, divided we fall?"

All this may possibly depend on the conduct of this generation. Then let us all, here under this metropolitan sky, make, for ourselves and our children, a sacramental pledge that we will try to promote the final triumph of *Light* over *Darkness*, and of *Right* over *Might*; and that, so far as, under Providence, the event may depend on our conduct, Kentucky's twinned ensign, with its motto unchanged, shall bathe in the rays of millennial sunshine.

But the fashion of this world, like the shadow of a cloud, flitteth away. Mutability and decay are inscribed on all things earthly. *Thebes*, and *Tyre*, and *Palmyra*, and *Babylon*, the downfall of empires, and the ruins of the old world, are not the only memorials of this solemn truth. In sepulchral tones it is echoed from wastes of time scattered over our own continent. Successive generations who, ages ago, inhabited this fair land, have passed away and left not a trace of their history or their destiny behind. Here and there a mound of earth attests that they once were;—but all else concerning them is buried in oblivion. Tradition tells not their tale. The signers of our Declaration of Independence, and the signers of the Constitution of the United States, are all gone to another world. Even the graves of our departed pioneers are generally undistinguished and unknown. We tread, daily, on their ashes unconscious and unmoved. Already we have embalmed their memories in our nursery tales and begin to look on them as the legend heroes of a romantic age obscured by time. We ourselves must soon sleep with our fathers, and be to earth as if we had never been:—and our children and their children will soon follow us and repose with the nations of forgotten dead. Our institutions, too, and even this beloved country of ours, and all it contains, must perish forever.

Yet we have hopes that are immortal—interests that are imperishable—principles that are indestructible. Encouraged by those hopes, stimulated by those interests, and sustained by and sustaining those principles, let us, come what may, be true to God, true to ourselves, and faithful to our children, our country, and mankind. And then, whenever or wherever it may be our doom to look, for the last time, on earth, we may die justly proud of the title of "*Kentuckian*," and, with our expiring breath, may cordially exclaim—*Kentucky*, as she was:—*Kentucky*, as she is:—*Kentucky*, as she will be—KENTUCKY FOREVER.

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